

VOLUNTARY SERVICE NEWSLETTER

for the volunteers of VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York

February/March/April 2008 • Volume 8, Issue 1

Suicide Prevention Hotline is Working to Help Save the Lives of Veterans

On a hot August night, a Vietnam veteran with a history of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) found out his wife was leaving him. This was the last straw. He had a gun and a plan to kill himself.

As a last resort, he called VA's newly established around-the-clock Suicide Prevention Hotline. He told the counselor that he was severely distressed. Although the veteran declined the counselor's offer to provide immediate 911 services, the counselor convinced him to leave his gun behind and drive to the nearby VA hospital.

VA health care providers met him at the emergency room door, escorted him through the system and admitted him for intensive mental health services. He is now safe and receiving

treatment. The local Suicide Prevention Coordinator (SPC) is following his care and maintaining contact with him.

Several hundred similar stories with successful outcomes have taken place since the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) set up its 24-hour, seven-days-a-week Suicide Prevention Hotline, 1-800-273-TALK (8255), in late July.

Dr. Janet Kemp, VA's national suicide prevention coordinator who also is associate director for education and training at the Mental Health Center of Excellence at Canandaigua said the Hotline has received thousands of calls from veterans since it became operational.

"This is quite literally a life and death situation for many of those who call, and we have already made a difference in a number of veterans' lives," Kemp said.

Calls sometimes come from relatives, such as the wife of a veteran who served two tours in Vietnam and had a history of psychological admissions for PTSD. The wife was especially concerned because the veteran had recently been hospitalized and his father had committed suicide.

A Hotline counselor provided her with immediate support and encouragement. The veteran received a call the next day from the suicide prevention coordinator and was referred to mental

health counselors at VA. His wife called the Hotline counselors back afterward to thank them for "saving his life."

Some calls have come from veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) and Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF). The aunt of an Iraqi war veteran called, saying she feared her 28-year-old nephew might hurt himself. The veteran initially declined to talk to Hotline counselors, but the suicide prevention coordinator called the next day and convinced him to come in for an evaluation.

The coordinator met him at the door and walked him through the emergency room and triage area. The veteran also was evaluated at the OIF-OEF walk-in clinic. He was enrolled for primary care at the community-based outpatient clinic that is closer to his home, and is being monitored. The veteran expressed his gratitude and said VA had "passed the test."

Calls also have come from women veterans, such as one from a veteran with two small children who reported that she was very depressed and having panic attacks.

The veteran recently moved and did not know many people in the area where she now lives. Although she had never harmed her children before, she was concerned she might hurt them if she did not get help soon.

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**Editorial Board**

Stephen Lemons, Ed.D., FACHE,
Network Director

Linda Weiss, Deputy Network Director

Kathleen Hider,
Network Communications Manager

Heather Schrader, Editor

Kathleen Laughlin, Design/Layout

**Web Site**

www.va.gov/visns/visn02/vet/volunteer.cfm



The VAVS newsletter has been created for all volunteers and potential volunteers of VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York. This publication is meant to showcase the wonderful work all of our volunteers contribute to VA. Produced by Network 2 Communications Department. Printed by veterans in the Pre-Vocational Apprenticeship Program, Bath VAMC.

**We Want to Hear from You!**

If you have any comments, questions, story ideas, etc. contact:

Network 2 Communications
Rochester VA Outpatient Clinic
465 Westfall Road, Rochester, NY 14620
(585) 463-2663
Heather.Schrader@va.gov

Network Director's Message

Starting the New Year on the Right Foot

Happy New Year! I hope you're enjoying our 2008 health and wellness calendar and are using it to set some healthy goals for yourself this year. I'm pleased to report that our Network is meeting or exceeding its clinical quality measures. Currently, we rank No. 1 nationally among 21 VA Health Care Networks on Veterans Health Administration's (VHA) Performance Measure "Vital Signs" report card. The report card measures the full spectrum of care—quality, access to services and patient satisfaction.



In the cover story, learn about the National Suicide Prevention Hotline located within our Network. Read about the appointment of the new Secretary of Veterans Affairs on page 3. See how our Veteran Contact Center is reaching out to veterans to keep their personal and health information up-to-date to improve customer service when you read about the new Pre-Registration Program on this page below. And of course, read about all of the volunteer activities taking place at each of our Medical Centers across the Network.

Stephen L. Lemons, Ed.D., FACHE
Network Director

Veterans Service Center Starts Pre-Registration Program

The Veterans Service Center has created a Pre-Registration Program to update our veteran patient's basic information (current address, insurance information).

Veterans will receive a call from a VA employee working in the Veteran Contact Center. The person calling will say they work for the Veteran Contact Center and remind the patient of his/her upcoming appointment(s). Other callers would not have access to this type of information.

Veterans will be asked for his/her address, phone numbers (home, cell and work), insurance information, next of kin, emergency contacts, and place of employment. They will never be asked for Social Security number, mother's maiden name, date of birth or place of birth.

The reason for this initiative is to ensure we have up-to-date information and to provide patients better customer service. This helps us get in touch with our patients. If we have a wrong address, prescriptions may not be delivered in a timely manner. By providing this information before an appointment, it shortens the patient's waiting time. The call from the Veteran Contact Center also serves as a reminder about upcoming appointments. It can help the hospital or clinic collect money from insurance companies. Insurance reimbursements can also be used to offset a veteran's co-payments.





Secretary of Veterans Affairs Named/Nominated

President Bush named retired Lieutenant General Jim Peake as Secretary of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Dr. Peake is a West Point graduate and decorated Vietnam veteran, who retired in 2004 after serving 40 years in the US Army. An accomplished physician, Dr. Peake served as the Surgeon General of the Army for four years.

Dr. James B. Peake became Chief Medical Director and Chief Operating Officer of QTC Management in 2006. QTC serves veterans, separating soldiers and other government agencies by providing quality, timely medical examination and electronic medical record services that enable the medical, disability and health communities to manage medical data and information cost-effectively.

Prior to this, Dr. Peake was Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Project Hope, a non-profit international health foundation with offices and programs in more than 30 different countries on five continents. While at Project HOPE he helped to orchestrate the use of civilian volunteers aboard the Navy Hospital Ship Mercy as it responded to the Tsunami disaster in Indonesia and also as part of the Hurricane Katrina response aboard the Navy Hospital Ship Comfort.

Dr. Peake's experience on active duty includes military and civilian humanitarian operations in responding to the Miami / Dade

County impact area of Hurricane Andrew as the commander of the 44th Medical Brigade and Surgeon to the Joint Task Force Commander.

Dr. Peake is a 1966 graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point, and began his career as an infantry officer. He is a highly decorated Vietnam veteran having served as platoon leader with the 101st Airborne Division. After Vietnam, he attended Cornell University Medical College and became board certified in general and thoracic surgery. Dr. Peake is also a graduate of the United States Army War College.

Dr. Peake is a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons, the American College of Cardiology, and member of the Society of Thoracic Surgeons.

He has been honored with the order of Military Medical Merit; the "A" Professional Designator; and the Medallion, Surgeon General of the United States.



Spotlight on Albany

Volunteer Opportunities

- ☛ Fisher House: Check in guests, give tours of the house, answer phone, typing and data input, answer guests' questions
- ☛ Adult Day Health Care Program: Assist staff with programs and socialization
- ☛ Eye Clinic: Filing and other clerical tasks
- ☛ Front Lobby Greeter Desk (evening and weekend hours)
- ☛ Shuttle Drivers (weekdays and on-call)
- ☛ Patient Escort (weekday afternoons)
- ☛ Rehabilitative Medicine Office: Clerical assistance

Wish List

- ☐ Cans of decaf coffee
- ☐ Creamora
- ☐ Sugar
- ☐ Sneakers (men's - all sizes, new)
- ☐ Coats (XL and larger)
- ☐ Sweatpants (M, L, XL, 3X, 4X, 5X)
- ☐ Funds for:
 - Replacement vans
 - Maintaining fish tanks
 - Hi-Low traction table
 - Recumbent cross trainer

Spotlight on Albany continued on page 4



Spotlight on
Albany
(continued)

February may be a short month, but at the Albany VA Medical Center, we have three major events that we invite you to participate in:

National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans is a weeklong activity-filled tribute. During the week of February 10-16, Voluntary Service and Recreation/Music Therapy staff schedule performances, special visitations, and gift distributions by community/school groups and elected officials. Our goal is to reach as many veterans throughout the week as possible to show them our gratitude.

The re-enactment of the flag raising on Iwo Jima will be held on Friday, February 22 at 9:00 a.m. in the front circle. It will be followed by a ceremony in the auditorium. This event is sponsored by the Marine Corps League. Veterans who were present at this historical event will be honored at the ceremony.



*Flag-raising
re-enactment
from last year.*

CALENDAR CORNER

February 10-16

National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Week

Friday, February 22

Re-enactment of the Flag Raising on Iwo Jima
9:00 a.m.

Front circle followed by a ceremony in the auditorium.

Sunday, February 24

Four Chaplains Brotherhood Award
2:30 p.m.

Chapel followed by a reception for the recipient in the auditorium.

March 29-April 5

Winter Sports Clinic
Snowmass Village Aspen, CO

* Contact Karen at (518) 626-5506 for more information

Monday, April 9

POW/MIA Recognition Day Ceremony
1:00 p.m.

Auditorium

Tuesday, April 15

VAVS Committee Meeting

1:00 p.m.

Auditorium

Sunday, April 27

Volunteer Recognition Ceremony and Dinner
Noon

Holiday Turf Inn, Wolf Road in Colonie

April 27-May 3

National Volunteer Week

The Four Chaplains Brotherhood Award Ceremony is on Sunday, February 24 at 2:30 p.m. in the chapel. It will be followed by a reception for the recipient in the auditorium. This prestigious award is given annually to someone whose life of service and devotion to others demonstrates the spirit of the four chaplains who sacrificed their lives on the USS Dorchester in 1943. The event is sponsored by Jewish War Veterans' Albany Post 105.

A ceremony and dinner will be held April 27 to honor our 1,071 volunteers and their commitment to serving our Medical Center, National Cemetery, community based outpatient clinics, Fisher House, and other off-station sites. Our volunteers served a total of 85,792 hours in fiscal year 2007. This year, we saw an increase in corporate and community partnerships. This increased donations to our clothing and toiletry program as well as personal interactions with our hospitalized veterans. We are proud of our volunteers' commitment to "serving those who have served."



Last year, Dr. Stephen Lemons, Network Director and Mary-Ellen Piché, Albany Medical Center Director, presented the 10,000-hour award to Burlg Chesbro.

Spotlight on Albany continued on page 11



Spotlight on *Bath*

American Legion Auxiliary Gift Shop Event

The Annual American Legion Auxiliary Gift Shop event was held at the Bath VA Medical Center again this year. The American Legion family, which includes the Auxiliary, Legion, and Sons of the American Legion from the sixth and (part of the) seventh Districts of New York, assisted veterans with shopping and wrapping holiday gifts. As a part of the effort, Co-Op Feed out of Elmira utilized their semi-trucks and drivers to assist in the delivery of the gifts to the Bath VA. The U. S. Post Office even set up a temporary station to ensure the packages were shipped.

"It is with heartfelt appreciation, that I say thank you to these tremendous volunteers who are an inspiration to all of us," said **David J. West**, Bath VA Medical Center Director. "They have touched the lives of so many at this important time of the year."

Dozens of members of the Legion family were a part of the event. The Legion family came from as far away as Broome County, spending the weekend in Bath so they could be a part of this annual activity. The Legion family donates approximately \$10,000 per year toward the purchase of gifts for veterans at the Bath VA to "shop" from. Each veteran is allowed to choose up to 10 gifts to be sent to family members.

"This is the one big thing we can do for all they have done for us," said **Addie Butler** who has been the event's chairperson for the past 20 years. "They appreciate everything. They really do."

Veteran, **Robert Davis, Jr.** who participated in the program said, "This is a wonderful program. It's a way of helping veterans out who don't have the resources, a real helping hand during this holiday season."



Pictured with Bath VA Medical Center Director, David J. West (top right), is Addie Butler, Gift Shop Chairperson (front center) and members of the American Legion family.

Bath Wish List

- ☐ Monetary donations for:
 - Jump Start Program
 - Clothing room
 - Emergent travel needs
- ☐ Gift cards from Tops
- ☐ Postage stamps
- ☐ Birthday wrapping paper



On December 9, the Elks Association placed wreaths in the Bath National Cemetery at the gravesites of the 28 War of 1812 soldiers buried there. In June of 1988, twenty-eight soldiers from the War of 1812, missing in Canada, were returned to American soil and laid to rest at the Bath National Cemetery.

CALENDAR CORNER

February 2
AMVETS "Because We Care" Day

February 10-16
National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Week

February 18
Presidents Day

April 5 or 19
Volunteer Recognition Ceremony

April 17
VAWS Quarterly Meeting





Spotlight on *Canandaigua*

Happy 75th Anniversary Canandaigua!

The Canandaigua VA Medical Center will be celebrating its 75th Anniversary on February 6, 2008. Many activities are scheduled the week of February 3-16 which is also National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Week. The program will begin with a performance by the Boogie Woogie Girls at 10:00 a.m. in the auditorium. A formal program will be held in the auditorium at 1:30 p.m. with special speakers, refreshments and a performance by the 98th Army Reserve Band. Poster Boards will be on display throughout the facility including pictures of the construction of the campus and pictures of retired employees and volunteers that are bound to spark a "blast from the past." A replica Gingerbread cake of the Medical Center will also be on display in the auditorium. There will be something for everyone – a way to welcome the community and celebrate the proud members of the Canandaigua VA family. We need your help to make these events a success. We will need escorts, greeters, etc. Please contact Voluntary Service at 393-7761 if you or your organization would like to be a part of this historic event.

Veterans Day Activities

Veterans Day activities were bountiful this year as we paid tribute to our veteran population.



Female Veterans Day Tea, sponsored by the American Legion Auxiliary and Voluntary Service.



Jim Worthing, international recording artist, songwriter and producer performed on November 9.



Missing Man Ceremony sponsored by the Knights of Columbus.

Ho Ho Ho

As usual, the Canandaigua VA Medical Center celebrated the holiday season with a variety of activities. Every inpatient and outpatient in a structured program received a hooded, zippered sweatshirt (with "Land of the Free, Because of the Brave" on it), a comfort kit and knit hat. Gifts were wrapped and distributed to the wards by our volunteers. Everyone helped the veterans open their gifts and enjoy refreshments. We had an auditorium filled with cheer as volunteers and staff sang Christmas carols as they worked to make our veterans holidays special.



Service members came to spread holiday cheer during last year's celebration.

American Legion Auxiliary Gift Shop

The American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) did it again. They provided our veterans with the opportunity to shop for his or her loved ones for Christmas. As in the past, gifts were chosen, wrapped and mailed at absolutely no cost to the veterans. We received a number of thank you notes from family members who were appreciative of the ALA and their commitment to veterans.

Spotlight on Cndga. continued on page 7





Spotlight on *Canadga.*

(continued)

Volunteer Opportunities

- 👤 DAV drivers
- 👤 Companions
- 👤 Performance groups
- 👤 Escorts for church services
- 👤 Clerical
- 👤 Piano player (3:00 p.m. Saturday Mass and 10:30 a.m. Sunday Church Services)

Wish List

- ☐ Comfort care items:
 - Deodorant
 - Shampoo
 - Shaving cream
 - Body lotion
- ☐ Coffee (regular and decaf)
- ☐ Creamer, sugar, sugar substitute
- ☐ Hot chocolate
- ☐ Bowling/movie tickets
- ☐ Baking items, peanut butter, English muffins
- ☐ Gift cards from Walmart/Wegmans/Tops
- ☐ Prepaid phone cards
- ☐ Tickets to sporting events, zoo and outings
- ☐ Paper products
 - Plates, napkins, dinnerware
- ☐ New socks and underwear
- ☐ 41-cent postage stamps
- ☐ Non-alcoholic beer (cans)
- ☐ Monetary donations for the Vet Center

Contact Voluntary Service for more information.

Gospel Fest

A Gospel Fest sponsored by Chaplain Service was held on Saturday, September 22 at the Medical Center. Performers included several church gospel groups from the area. Veterans enjoyed their performances and appreciated the volunteers who helped to escort them to the event.



Gospel choir performs for veterans.

CALENDAR CORNER

February 3-16

Canandaigua VA Medical Center 75th Anniversary/National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans Week

There are a lot of activities scheduled throughout the week
Escorts needed*

February 6 (Snow Date: February 8)

75th Anniversary Celebration - 1:30 p.m.
Bldg. 5, Auditorium

February 13

VAVS/Consumer Council Meeting - 1:00 p.m.
Bldg. 5, Auditorium

March 4

Bingo- 7:00 p.m.
Bldg. 5, Auditorium
Escorts needed*

March 16

Bingo and Lunch - Noon
Bldg. 5, Auditorium
Escorts needed*

April 1

Bingo - 7:00 p.m.

Bldg. 5, Auditorium
Escorts needed*

April 6

Bingo and Lunch - Noon
Bldg. 5, Auditorium
Escorts needed*

April 9-12

VAVS National Meeting
Orlando, Florida

April 27-May 3

National Volunteer Week
Refreshments served
Canandaigua - Volunteer Lounge
ROPC - Employee Lounge

May 1

Annual Volunteer Awards Banquet
Burgundy Basin Inn - 11:30 a.m.

*Escorts are needed 45 minutes prior to the event to take patients to the auditorium. Without your assistance, many of the patients may not be able to participate.





Spotlight on Syracuse



Holiday Event

Santa Claus and his elves came to visit the Syracuse VA in December. **James Snyder, Courtney Blom**, and a Syracuse University student volunteer provided a happy holiday atmosphere for our resident patients during a holiday activity on the Transitional Care Unit.

James Snyder (Santa), Rita Boettger (left) and Ken Feind (right) spread some holiday cheer.

CALENDAR CORNER

February

MOVE! Program every Monday

Every Monday at 9:30 a.m.

Every Wednesday at 1:30 p.m.

February

Veteran Benefit Seminars

1st and 3rd Friday of the month at 9:30 a.m.

February 14

Valentine's Day Party

Sponsored by VFW

February 14 & 28

Adaptive Tennis Programs

February 17

Dinner Trip to Mattydale

Sponsored by VFW

March 3

Coffee Social

Sponsored by Eastern Star

March 17

Dinner Trip to Mattydale

Sponsored by VFW

March 19

Irish Dancers and Music

Sponsored by UAW

March 20

Black Jack Games

Sponsored by DAV

April 2

Pizza Party

Sponsored by BPOE

April 9

Plainville Restaurant Dinner

Sponsored by VFW

April 11

Day at the Races

Sponsored by American Legion Auxiliary

April 17

Kentucky Fried Chicken Dinner

Sponsored by DAV

Reminders:

Service Organizations are reminded that we need to have current certification letters on file from your national office designating the Representatives and Deputy Representatives.

For service organizations involved in an activity at the Syracuse VA: Please have someone designated in your group who will complete the Community Activity Worksheet. This form has places to list your participants' names. These can be picked up in Voluntary Service or Recreation Therapy during your event.

Annual Joint Review (AJR) Reports are due throughout the year. The following is a list of those due through May 2008. Organization representatives should contact Voluntary Service at (315) 425-5317 to make an appointment to obtain AJR required information.

Annual Joint Review Due Dates

February: Archdiocese for the Military Services, U.S.A.; Marine Corps League; Military Order of the Cootie of the U.S.

March: The Salvation Army

April: The American Legion; The American Red Cross; Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks of the U.S.; Disabled American Veterans; Italian American War Veterans of the U.S.; Ladies Auxiliary; Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S.

May: National Society Colonial Dames XVII Century; The National Society of the Sons of the American Revolution; Paralyzed Veterans of America; Vietnam Veterans of America

Spotlight on Syracuse continued on page 9





Spotlight on *Syracuse*

(continued)

Volunteer Recognition Event

Syracuse VA Voluntary Service held its annual Volunteer Recognition Event "Volunteer in Your Own Backyard" on November 9. More than 150 volunteers and staff attended the event that recognized the involvement and accomplishments of the Syracuse VA Medical Center volunteers.

We would like to thank all of our volunteers for the time they spend helping the medical center and our patients. This year, some significant volunteer hour milestones have been reached:

3,750 hours: **Gerald Bolton** and **Robert Okun**; 5,000 hours: **Lois Evans**, **John Heath**, **George LePorte**, **Dorothy Sherman**; 6,250 hours: **Zeland (Zeke) Boice** and **Roy Compton**; 7,500 hours: **Ted Chandler**; 8,750 hours: **Norman Davie** and **William Fowler**; 10,000 hours: **James Schafer** (Silver Bowl Award)

In addition to these awards, special presentations were made to two of our volunteers who individually have shown a dedication to our mission of caring for our patients with a caring commitment to their needs.

Recreation Therapy honored **Mike Shatrau** with their Commitment to Caring Award. Mike provides music presentations for the veterans in the Transitional Care Unit.



Lois Evans (left) was honored with the Spirit of Caring Award. Also pictured is Lois' husband, Don (right), also a Syracuse VA volunteer.

In a special recognition, the VAVS Executive Committee honored **Lois Evans** the Spirit of Caring Award. Lois has been a volunteer at the Medical Center since 1979, logging more than 5,000 volunteer hours. In the beginning of her VA volunteer career, Lois volunteered with the Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary. She was Santa's elf during the holidays and a vaudeville dancer. Later, she volunteered as a ward clerk helping staff make phone calls and transport patients to appointments. More recently, Lois has volunteered in the Voluntary Service Office, augmenting staff during absences and assisting with Voluntary Service programs.



Norm Davie and Bill Fowler (center) received plaques and recognition for more than 8,750 hours of service at the Syracuse VA. Also pictured is Syracuse Medical Center Director, James Cody (far left) and Voluntary Service Manager, Bob Hawes (far right).



Dan Burns (center) accepts an award for Sampson, the Recreation Therapy Pet of the Year.



James Schafer (center) received the Silver Bowl Award for more than 10,000 hours of service at the Syracuse VA Medical Center. Also pictured is Syracuse Medical Center Director, James Cody (left) and Voluntary Service Manager, Bob Hawes (right).

Wish List

- ☐ Personal care items
Combs, cornstarch powder, deodorant, shampoo, shaving cream, denture cream, mouthwash, toothpaste
- ☐ Winter coats (all adult sizes)
- ☐ White T-shirts and sweatshirts (plain) sizes L, XL, 2XL
- ☐ Wood, large number clocks (40)
- ☐ Decorative bulletin boards (22 x 24 inches) (40-50)
- ☐ STAXI System wheelchairs





Spotlight on Western NY

Festival of Lights

Batavia hosted their 2nd Annual Festival of Lights during the holiday season. This event featured an outside light display, hot chocolate and cookies, gift bags, carolers and even a reading of "The Night Before Christmas." Recreation Service sponsored the event with the help of Pembroke Boy Scout Troop #6467, staff members, volunteers and carolers from several Genesee county area churches.

VA staff transport veterans through the Festival of Lights while children play in the freshly fallen snow.



Dennis Heberling, Assistant Director for VA Western New York Healthcare System (left) enjoys the lights with Pam Kaznowski, Recreation Service Manager and veteran Richard McDonald.

Annual Wreath Hanging

Each year, the American Legion 8th District takes time to remember their fellow veterans at Batavia and Buffalo with their Wreath Hanging Ceremony.



VA Western New York Healthcare System Medical Center Director, Michael Finegan (center) with the American Legion 8th District Legionnaires in Buffalo.

Holiday Donations

Amherst AMVETS Post #49 was very generous to the veterans of Western New York. They donated a \$250 check, televisions, clothing, DVDs, and books.



VA Western New York Healthcare System Medical Center Director, Michael Finegan (4th from left) accepts a check from AMVETS Post #49 members.



The Lamda Chapter of Alpha Delta Kappa International Sorority of Educators donated clothing, personnel hygiene items, and snacks for our Nursing Home Care Units, Occupational Therapy Service and Recreation Service. (left to right) Julie Stuhlmiller, Catherine Stuhlmiller, and Laura Sexton.

Spotlight on WNY continued on page 11

CALENDAR CORNER

February 10

Four Chaplain's Ceremony - 1:00 p.m.
Buffalo — Room 1109C

February 14

National Salute to Veterans Open House
1:30 p.m. — Batavia — All lodges
1:00 p.m. — Buffalo — Room 301

February 18

President's Day Holiday

February 20

VAVS Committee Meeting - 1:30 p.m.
Batavia — Building 4, Auditorium

March 3

Creative Arts Festival
Co-Sponsored by the American Legion
Buffalo — Room 301

March 19

VAVS Committee Meeting - 1:30 p.m.
Buffalo — Room 301

April 9

National Former Prisoner of War Recognition Day
1:00 p.m. — Buffalo — Room 301

April 9 – 12

National VAVS Advisory Committee Meeting
Orlando, FL

April 10

American Red Cross Blood Drive - 8:30 a.m.
Buffalo — Room 301

April 24

Take Your Children to Work Day
Batavia and Buffalo

April 27 – May 3

National Volunteer Week

April 28

Annual Volunteer Awards Ceremony - 6:30 p.m.
Batavia — Bohn's Restaurant





Spotlight on *wny* (continued)

Volunteer Opportunities

- ☛ Adult Day Health Care: Assist veterans and work with staff - Buffalo
- ☛ Clerical: Buffalo
- ☛ Computer Assistant: Assist patients with computer skills - Batavia
- ☛ Computer Assistant: Create electronic documents - Buffalo
- ☛ DAV Transportation Program Driver: Batavia and Buffalo
- ☛ Emergency Room and Women's Wellness Clinic: Transport/deliver services - Buffalo
- ☛ Greeters: Welcome veterans and visitors and help them get to appointments and other areas - Buffalo
- ☛ Guest Parking Lot Shuttle Driver: Buffalo
- ☛ Mailroom: Buffalo
- ☛ Patient/Ward Visitation(s): Batavia and Buffalo
- ☛ Patient Escort/Transport: Batavia and Buffalo
- ☛ Physical Therapy: Buffalo
- ☛ Reminder Phone Calls: Buffalo
- ☛ Recreational Aide: Assist with/organize activities for patients - Batavia and Buffalo

Veterans Day

Buffalo hosted a Veterans Day Ceremony on Sunday, November 11. More than 150 veterans and guests attended the event to hear **Lt. Colonel Terry McGuire**, US Army Reserve.

Wish List

- ☐ Art Therapy Supplies - Buffalo
- ☐ Treadmill(s) - Buffalo
- ☐ Comping Coupons - Batavia and Buffalo
- ☐ Welcome kits - Buffalo
- ☐ Comfort items - Buffalo
- ☐ Funding for:
 - Patient activities - Batavia and Buffalo
 - Daily newspaper subscriptions - Batavia and Buffalo
 - Magazine subscriptions - Batavia and Buffalo
 - Travel for patients in need - Buffalo
 - Coffee cart program - Batavia and Buffalo
 - DAV Volunteer Transportation Program - Batavia and Buffalo - Send donation directly to DAV Department of New York

Note: Before purchasing any item, please contact Voluntary Service to make sure that the item has not already been purchased.

Due to the overwhelming success of our recent wheelchair project, there are no requests for additional wheelchairs at this time. Thank you for your generosity.



Lt. Colonel Terry McGuire addresses the crowd.

Network 2 Volunteer Staff

Albany

Karen Haas, Manager
(518) 626-5506

Stephanie Bonenfant, Specialist
(518) 626-5508

Bath

Susan DeSalvo, Manager
(607) 664-4773

Sis Conrad, Specialist
(607) 664-4772

Richard Conklin, Clerk
(607) 664-4771

Canandaigua

Robin Johnson, Manager
(585) 393-7759

Dan Ryan, Public Affairs
(585) 393-7209

Patti Ciancaglini, Specialist
(585) 393-7761

Syracuse

Bob Hawes, Manager
(315) 425-4681

Sheri Valle, Program Assistant
(315) 425-4898

Western New York (Buffalo and Batavia)

Mark Francis, Manager
(716) 862-8667

Shawn Gail, Specialist Intern
(585) 862-8671

Kathleen Martin, Specialist
(585) 297-1196

Kelly Clark, Specialist
(716) 862-8672



"Suicide Prevention Hotline" continued from page 1

She had been a victim of sexual harassment in the military and was likely to benefit from a more thorough evaluation. After talking with the Hotline counselor, the woman agreed to be referred the suicide prevention coordinator, who helped her access the multiple counseling services she is now receiving from VA.

The Canandaigua-based Hotline counselors who take the calls are professionally trained in crisis intervention in order to deal with any and all situations. They have re-

ferred over 300 veterans to local suicide prevention coordinators or mental health professionals for further counseling and treatment. Several callers received emergency rescue services or urgent referrals to their VAs for immediate care.

To make veterans aware of this important program, Under Secretary for Health, **Michael J. Kussman, MD, MS, MACP** is sending a letter about suicide (signs and symptoms) and the toll-free suicide prevention hotline 800 number to all veterans.

Reaching Us Is Easy

VA Medical Centers:

Albany

113 Holland Avenue
Albany, NY 12208
(518) 626-5000

Batavia

222 Richmond Avenue
Batavia, NY 14020
(585) 297-1000

Bath

76 Veterans Avenue
Bath, NY 14810
(607) 664-4000

Buffalo

3495 Bailey Avenue
Buffalo, NY 14215
(716) 834-9200

Canandaigua

400 Fort Hill Avenue
Canandaigua, NY 14424
(585) 394-2000
1-(800) 204-9917

Syracuse

800 Irving Avenue
Syracuse, NY 13210
(315) 425-4400

Community-Based Outpatient Clinics:

Auburn

Auburn Memorial Hospital
17 Lansing St.
Auburn, NY 13021
(315) 255-7002

Bainbridge

109 North Main Street
Bainbridge, NY 13733
(607) 967-8590

Binghamton

425 Robinson Street
Binghamton, NY 13901
(607) 772-9100

Carthage

3 Bridge Street
Carthage, NY 13619
(315) 493-4180

Catskill

Greene Medical Bldg.
159 Jefferson Heights
Catskill, NY 12414
(518) 943-7515

Clifton Park

1673 Route 9
Clifton Park, NY 12065
(518) 383-8506

Cortland

1129 Commons Avenue
Cortland, NY 13045
(607) 662-1517

Dunkirk

Valor Health Center
166 East 4th Street
Dunkirk, NY 14048
1-(800) 310-5001

Elizabethtown

P.O. Box 277, Park St.
Elizabethtown, NY 12932
(518) 873-3295

Elmira

Health Services Bldg.
200 Madison Ave.
Suite 2E
Elmira, NY 14901
(877) 845-3247

Fonda

Camp Mohawk Plaza
Rt. 30A
Fonda, NY 12068
(518) 853-1247

Glens Falls

84 Broad Street
Glens Falls, NY 12801
(518) 798-6066

Ithaca

10 Arrowwood Drive
Ithaca, NY 14850
(607) 274-4680

Jamestown

The Resource Center
896 East Second Street
Jamestown, NY 14701
(716) 661-1447

Kingston

63 Hurley Avenue
Kingston, NY 12401
(845) 331-8322

Lackawanna

Our Lady of Victory
Family Care Center
227 Ridge Road
Lackawanna, NY 14218
(716) 822-5944

Lockport

Ambulatory Care Center
5875 S. Transit Road
Lockport, NY 14094
(716) 433-2025

Malone

183 Park Street, Suite 3
Malone, NY 12953
(518) 481-2545

Massena

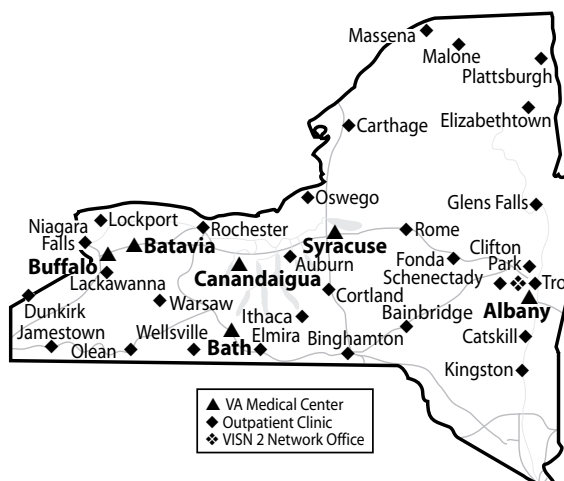
1 Hospital Drive
Massena, NY 13662
(315) 769-4253

Niagara Falls

2201 Pine Avenue
Niagara Falls, NY 14301
1-(800) 223-4810

Olean

465 North Union Street
Olean, NY 14760
(716) 373-7709



Oswego

Seneca Hills Health
Services Center
County Route 45A
Oswego, NY 13126
(315) 343-0925

Plattsburgh

80 Sharron Avenue
Plattsburgh, NY 12901
(518) 561-6247

Rochester

465 Westfall Road
Rochester, NY 14620
(585) 463-2600

Rome

125 Brookley Road
Bldg. 510
Rome, NY 13441
(315) 334-7100

Schenectady

1322 Gerling St. Sheridan Plaza
Schenectady, NY 12308
(518) 346-3334

Troy

295 River Street
Troy, NY 12180
(518) 274-7707

Warsaw

Wyoming County
Community Hospital
400 N. Main Street
Warsaw, NY 14569
(585) 297-1000

Wellsville

3458 Riverside Drive, Route 19
Wellsville, NY 14895
1-(877) 845-3247

VA Health Care On The Web

www.va.gov/visns/visn02

For Reliable Health Information On The Web

www.myhealth.va.gov

Veterans Service Contact Center

1-888-823-9656

For information on eligibility, VA health care, benefits,
enrollment or questions on your billing statement